the pilot project and its evaluation by an independent agency, the scheme would be further extended to cover all the blocks in the country.

(e) In order to promote use of LPG in rural households, Government have directed Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to concentrate on setting up more distributorships in rural areas and also to adopt innovative methods such as sale through rural mobile vehicles, setting up community kitchens, and sale of small size 5 kg. cylinders for low income group customers.

Unexploited hydro-carbon reserves

2918. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of hydro-carbon deposits in the country unexploited so far;

(b) whether Government have set aside any percentage of hydro-carbon for future use; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The total prognosticated hydrocarbon resources in the country amount to 28 billion tonnes oil plus oil equivalent of gas, out of which 8.2 billion tonnes have been established as reserves in the country *i.e.* 29 per cent of the total prognosticated resources available to the country. The remaining 20 billion tonnes are yet to be established.

(b) and (c) India being an energy deficit country, our thrust has been to optimally produce as much oil and gas as possible from available resources to meet the increasing demand for hydrocarbons. The account is on "optimization", not "maximization" of output to ensure sustained availability not the long term. However, to ensure oil and gas security for the country, the Government has taken the following initiatives:—

(i) acceleration of exploration in domestic areas of Indian sedimentary basins.

(ii) Implementation of IOR/EOR schemes.

(iii) offering of new exploration blocks to National Oil Companies, private/joint venture companies and foreign companies through New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP).

(iv) acquiring exploration blocks and producing properties abroad.

(v) alternate resources of energies such as Coal Bed Methane (CBM), Gas Hydrates, Underground Coal Gasification.

(vi) storage of crude oil.

Funding for pipeline project

†2919. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Iran has offered to build an important part of Indo-Iran gas pipeline with its own money in order to nullify the American pressure on this pipeline;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The proposal for a gas pipeline from Iran to India through Pakistan is at an initial stage of discussion. The Government is discussing the details of the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline project with the Governments of Iran and Pakistan. The discussion is progressing satisfactorily.

Two separate Secretary-level Joint Working Groups (JWGs) *viz.*, the India-Iran special JWG and the India-Pakistan JWG, have been constituted to discuss the "financial, technical, commercial, legal and related issues to realize a safe and secure world-class project".

The first meeting of the India-Pakistan JWG was held in New Delhi on 12-13 July, 2005. Both sides stressed their "serious commitment" to address various issues pertaining to the project and agreed that once basic issues pertaining to the project had been satisfactorily resolved between the three countries concerned, they would enter into a "Framework Agreement". The two sides agreed on the crucial importance of urgently appointing their respective financial advisory consortia to advise on the project structure and related technical, financial, commercial and legal matters. The advisers are expected to submit their reports to

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.